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27 August 1966

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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE BULLETIN

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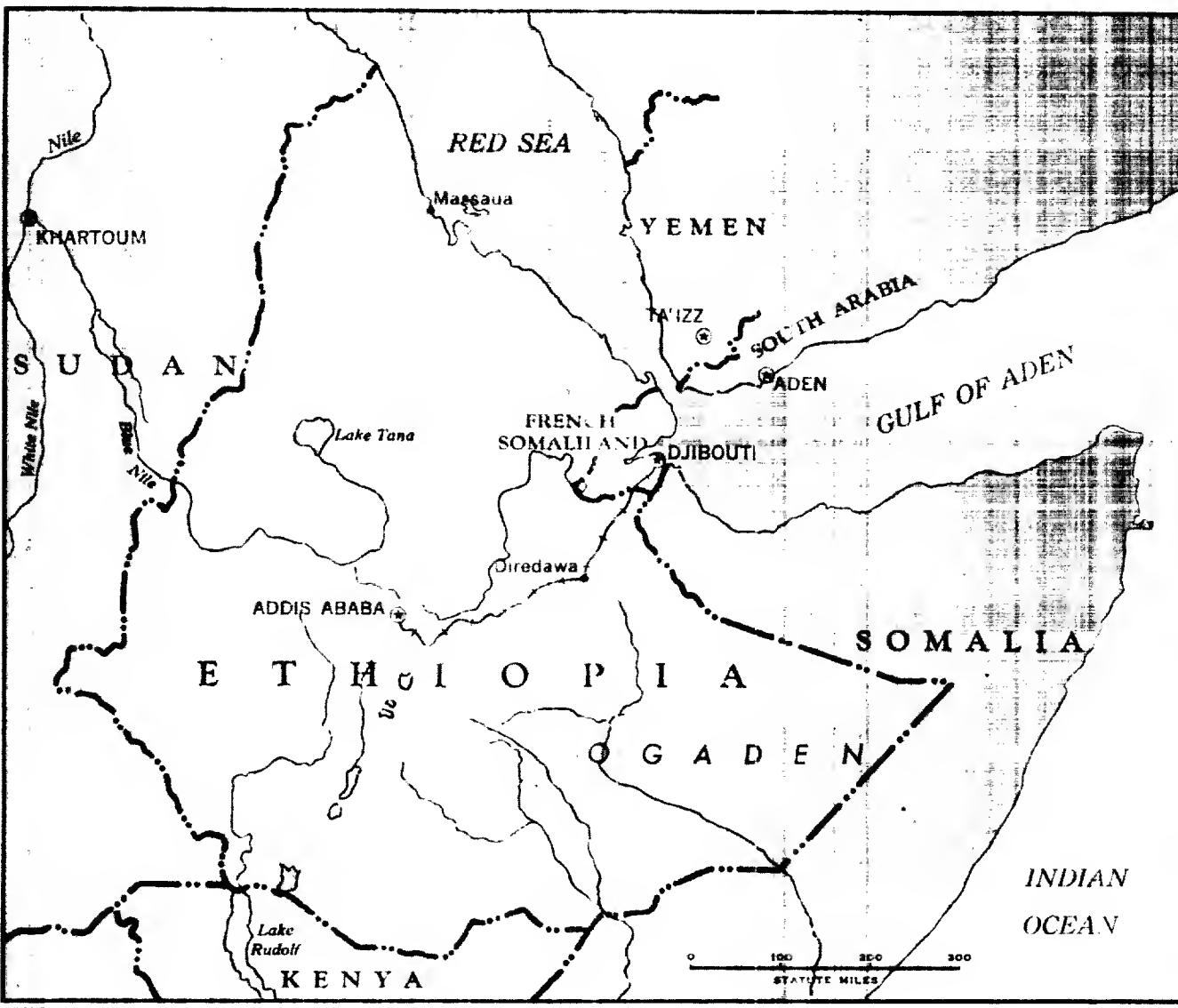
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FRENCH SOMALILAND



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French Somaliland: Anti-French demonstrations in Djibouti, prompted by President de Gaulle's visit, suggest that Paris may face increasing pressures for independence.

Nationalist agitation in French Somaliland has been carefully curbed by the French in recent years and has declined since the death of the most prominent nationalist leader in 1960. The most significant nationalist activity in recent years has stemmed from exiles in refuge in neighboring Somali Republic who spread propaganda and make appearances before the UN and African organizations. The government of the republic fears Paris will eventually permit French Somaliland to come under Ethiopian control. (See Map)

French Somaliland, at present an autonomous Overseas Territory, in 1958 voted to remain a member of the French Community. De Gaulle, during his visit, has reiterated his "respect" for that decision and is unlikely to bow to nationalist pressure. Djibouti is an important port and terminus for the French-run Franco-Ethiopian railroad. The territory's strategic importance to France is probably increasing with the upcoming departure of Britain from Aden. France has about 3,000 troops and small naval and air forces in [Djibouti] French Somaliland.

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NOTES

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Nigeria: [Several reports point to a possible early reaction by extremist Ibo elements against the northerners now dominating the Lagos junta. Continued harassment of Ibos by undisciplined northern army elements is increasing the chance of retaliatory action by the Ibos. This might include attempts to assassinate Supreme Commander Gowon and other selected northern officers, which would deepen tribal hatreds and abort the projected interregional negotiations.]

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